2: Read E-5 (1935-1939) 1956
FR5 Ngoni FR5

182 585 621 The prolonged series of interviews, exchanges and ceremonies emphasized the Ngoni conception of the marriage contract and its binding nature. They also underlined the severance of the new wife from her former family and house, and her gradual assimilation into her mother-in-law's house. This relationship between Ngoni women within the houses provided an effective means of integrating them into a village to which they were strangers.

CHAPTER IV

NGONI FAMILY STRUCTURE

183 59 'The Ngoni have power and authority over their women and their children.' So began one of the texts on *cingoni*, 'the thing that is Ngoni', by a man of the Ntumba people whose grandfather had been born among the Ngoni when they were in Songea. There was a recognised ideal pattern of an Ngoni family which covered both the individuals included in the family group and the place where they lived. This pattern was patrilineal in descent, virilocal in residence, polygynous in marriage for all men of standing who were not Christians. Other recognized and often-mentioned characteristics were the continued residence of widows in their husband's village after his death, the grouping of families by houses, and the *laweni*, or dormitory system for boys and unmarried young men.

581 593 The young wife wept on the day of her marriage because she was leaving the security and known relationships of her own family for the hazards and uncertainty of entering as a stranger into her husband's family group. The dramatization of these sentiments in the protracted marriage ceremony, and the allusions in the *mtimba* songs, brought out clearly the continuity of the man's relations with all members of his family and the sudden sharp break in the woman's relationship when she married. When her first child was born, and a new individual family group launched, her final integration into her husband's family began. As a mother who had borne a grandchild to her husband's parents she had thenceforward a direct part in the relationships within her husband's family, but as a wife she was always a stranger. The marriage negotiations and ceremonial express the closeness of the family ties, showing on the girl's side the anxiety of her family on parting with her to live among strangers; and on the man's side the hesitancy of the husband's family at taking into their midst an unknown and untried stranger. In addition, the protracted exchanges of cattle and feasts, delaying the final ceremony and building up relationships between the two family groups, illustrate the Ngoni attitude towards marriage as a